

The BOYS

Dear Becky



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2020

06

MATURE

The BOYS™

Dear Becky

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06

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female were The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth — superpower. Some superheroes had to be watched. Some of them had to be controlled. And some of them — sometimes — had to be taken out of the picture.

The issue was decided in one final battle against a massed superhero army, when a plan concocted by the “supes” to overthrow the US government went horribly awry. Now, twelve years later, Hughie and his lover Annie January have returned to his home in the Scottish town of Auchterladle — their battles fought and won, their torment over.

The days when Colonel Greg Mallory led The Boys are firmly in the past. So too are the times Billy Butcher shared with a woman who strove to send him down a different road. All of that is over and done with. Finished.

Now read on...

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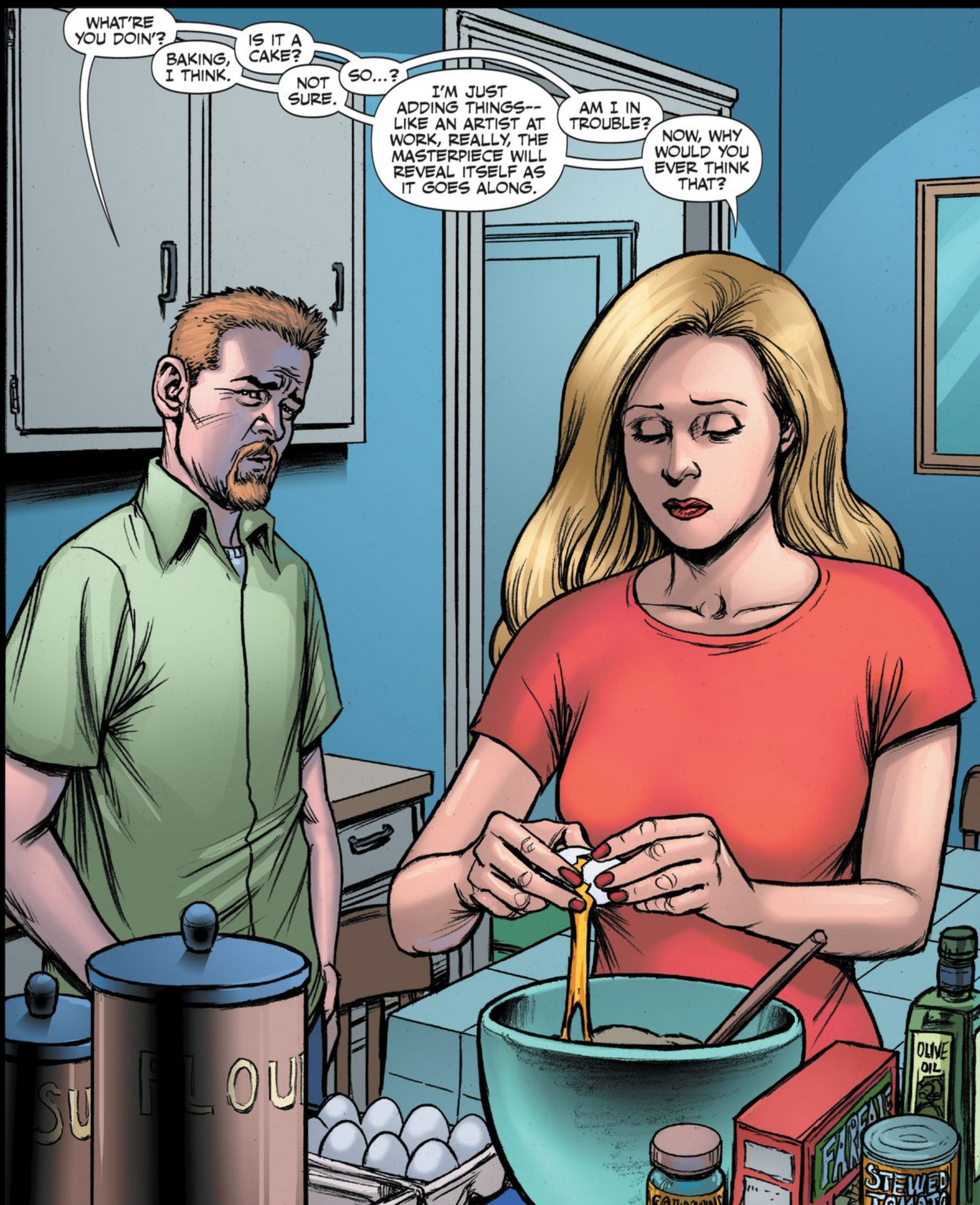


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6: THURSDAY



WHEN DID YOU TWIG I WAS... YOU KNOW...?

OH, FAIRLY EARLY ON.



ALL THE MIDNIGHT BATHROOM VISITS, SITTING UNDER YOUR TREE ON THE HILL... YOU KNOW YOU NEVER TOOK THE STUFF I GOT YOU FOR YOUR STOMACH?

OH...

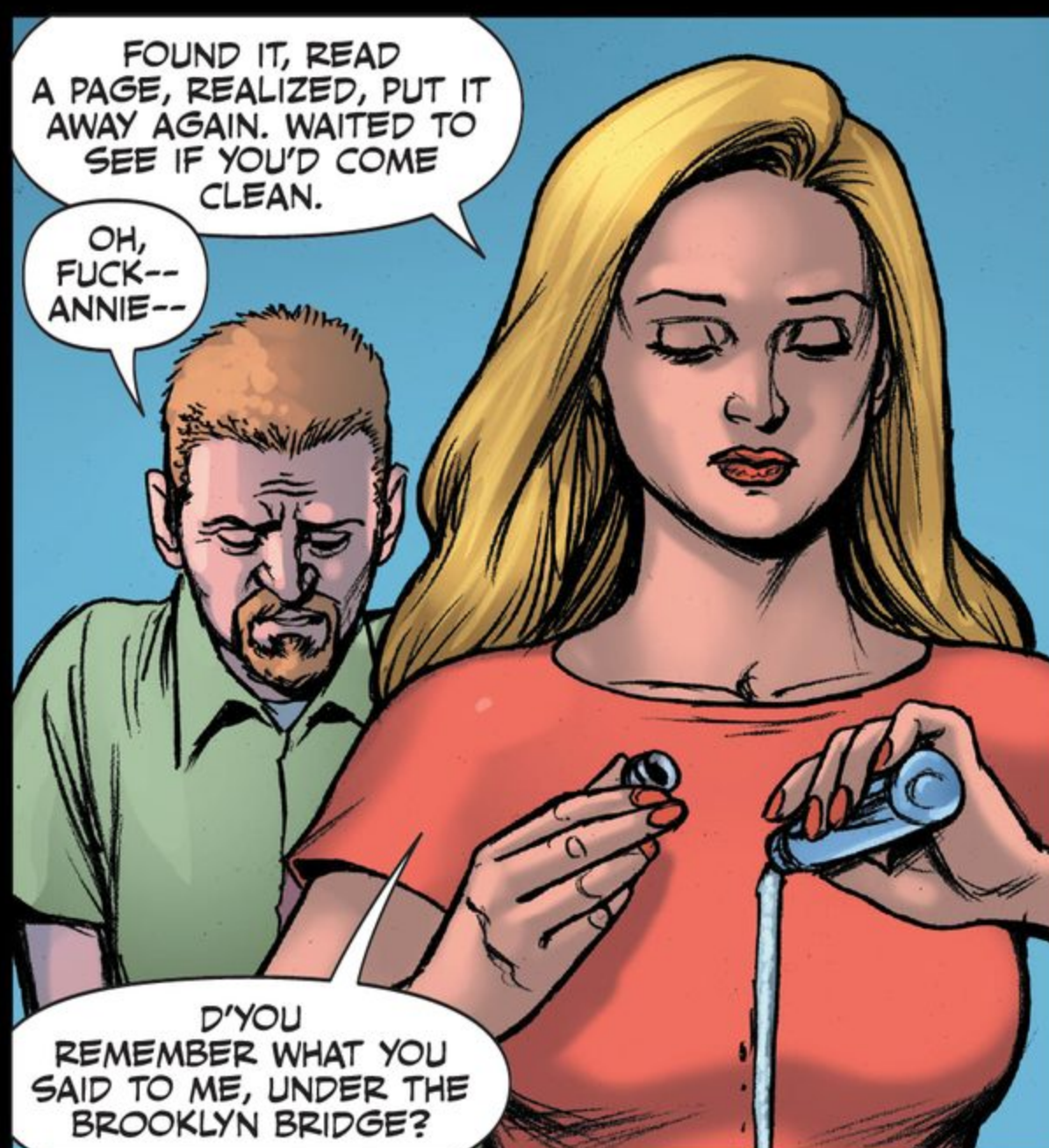
YOU DIDN'T EVEN POP A FEW OF THE PILLS OUT OF THE FOIL AND FLUSH THEM. YOU ARE THE WORLD'S WORST LIAR.



...NO, YOU CAN'T BE, OR YOU'D HAVE BEEN KILLED DOING WHAT YOU USED TO DO. YOU'RE THE WORLD'S WORST LIAR AROUND ME.

DID YOU, AH... SEE WHAT IT WAS I WAS READIN'...?

I MEAN I'M GUESSIN' YOU FOUND IT...



FOUND IT, READ A PAGE, REALIZED, PUT IT AWAY AGAIN. WAITED TO SEE IF YOU'D COME CLEAN.

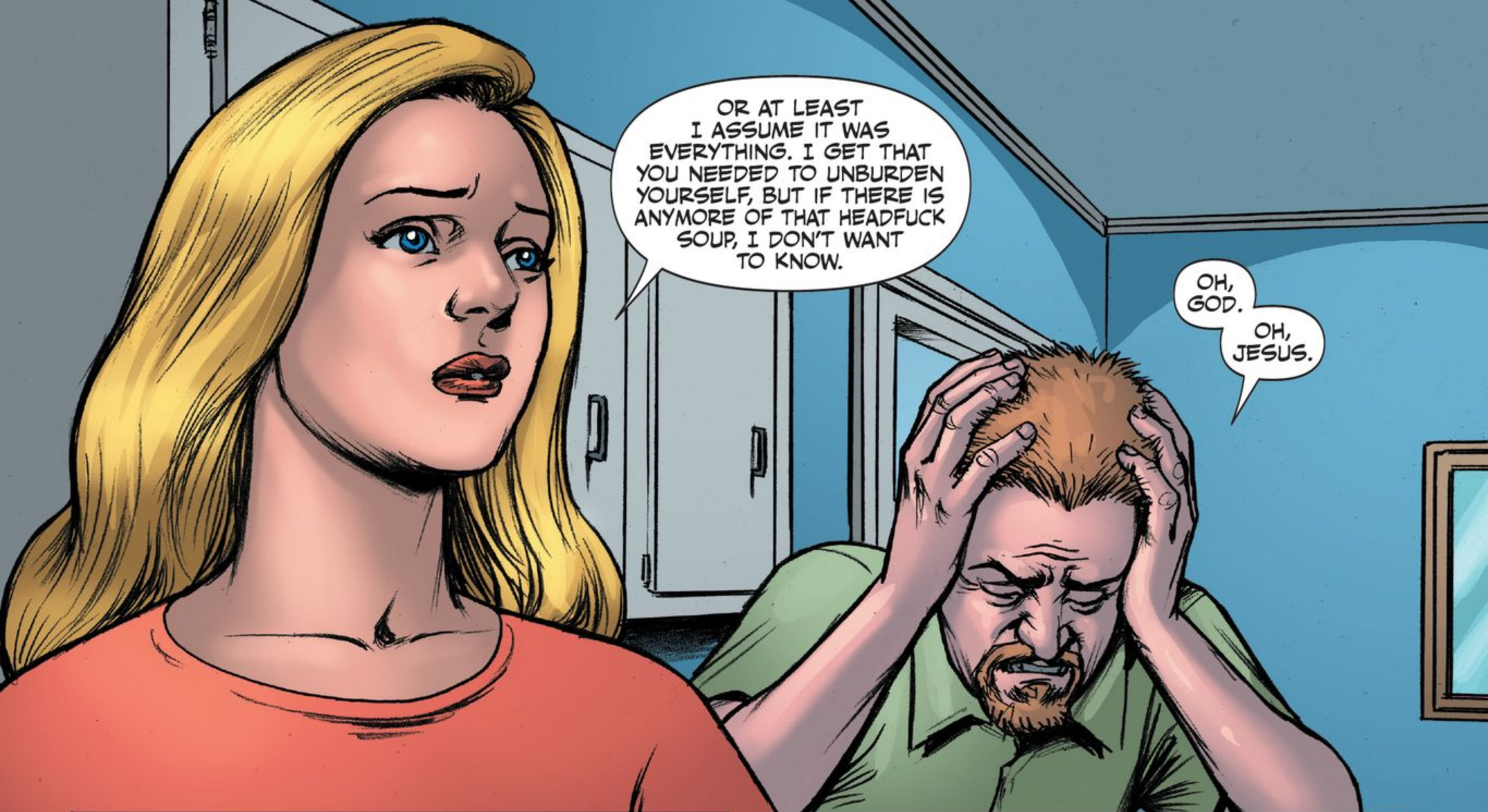
OH, FUCK-- ANNIE--

D'YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU SAID TO ME, UNDER THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE?



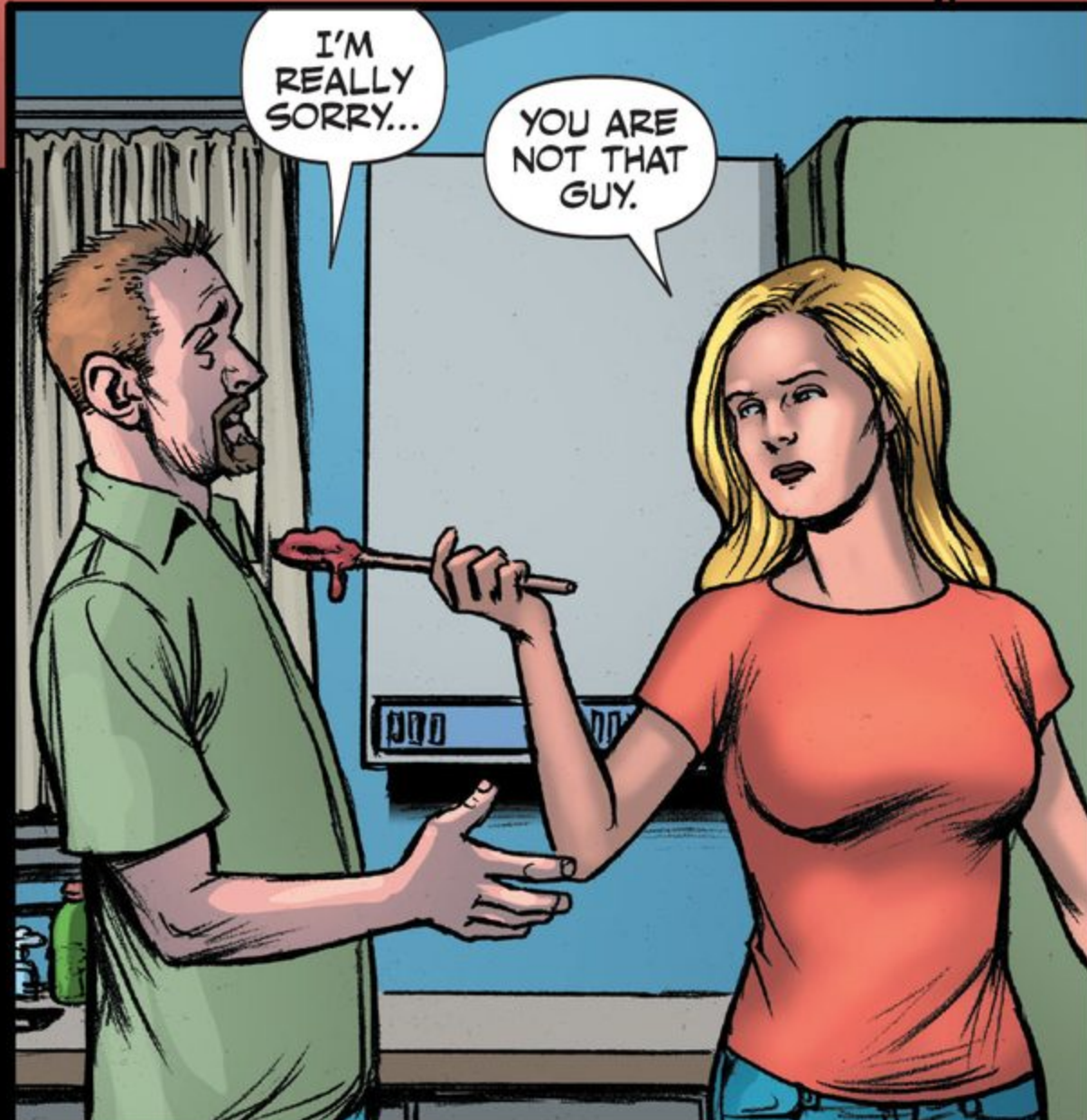
HE'S IN HELL, KICKING THE FUCK OUT OF THE DEVIL. AND NOW I NEVER WANT TO TALK ABOUT HIM AGAIN.

THEN YOU SPENT THE NEXT TEN OR TWELVE YEARS TELLING ME EVERYTHING, ABOUT HIM AND ALL THE REST OF IT TOO.



OR AT LEAST I ASSUME IT WAS EVERYTHING. I GET THAT YOU NEEDED TO UNBURDEN YOURSELF, BUT IF THERE IS ANYMORE OF THAT HEADFUCK SOUP, I DON'T WANT TO KNOW.

OH, GOD.
OH, JESUS.



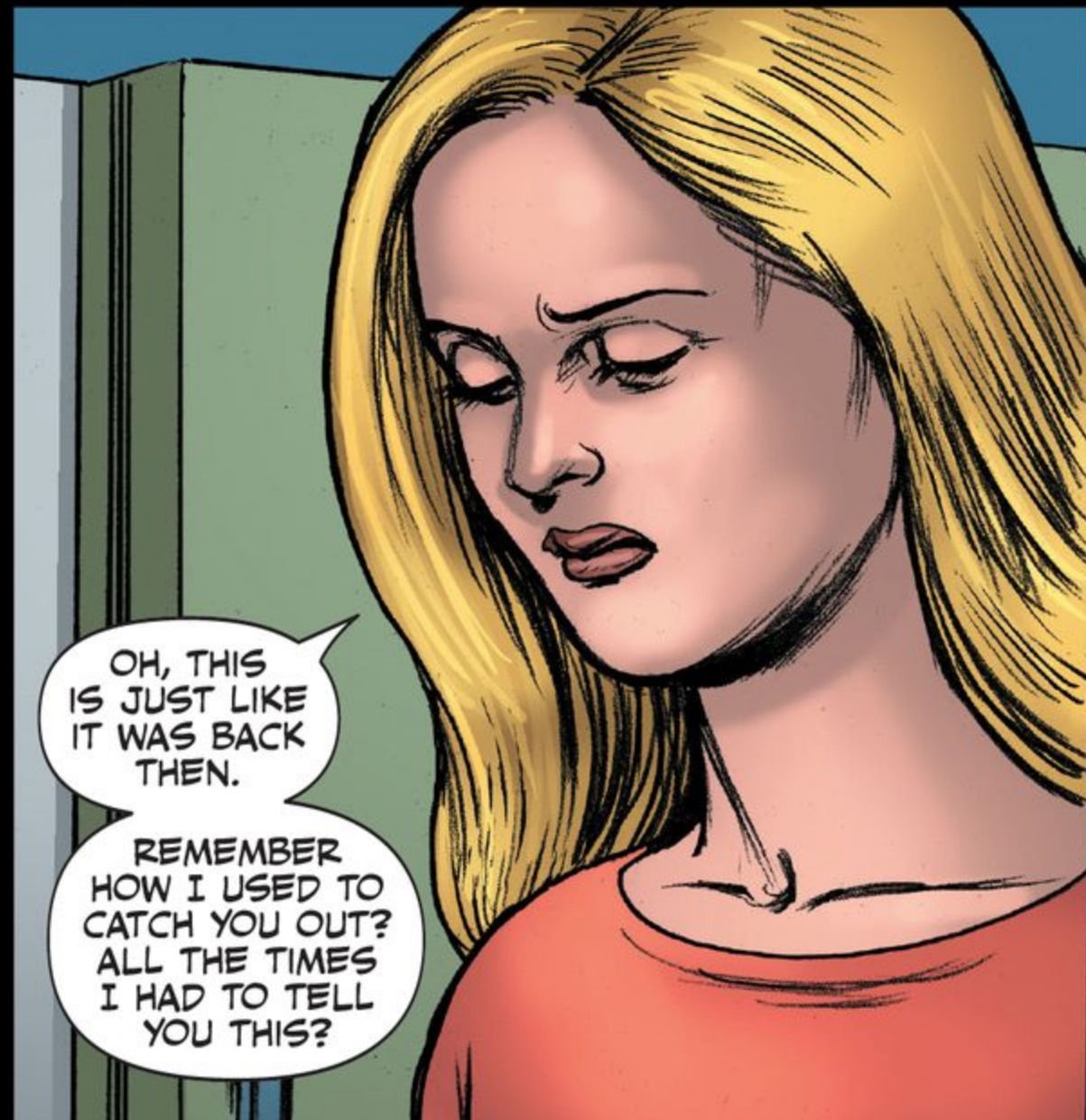
I'M REALLY SORRY...

YOU ARE NOT THAT GUY.



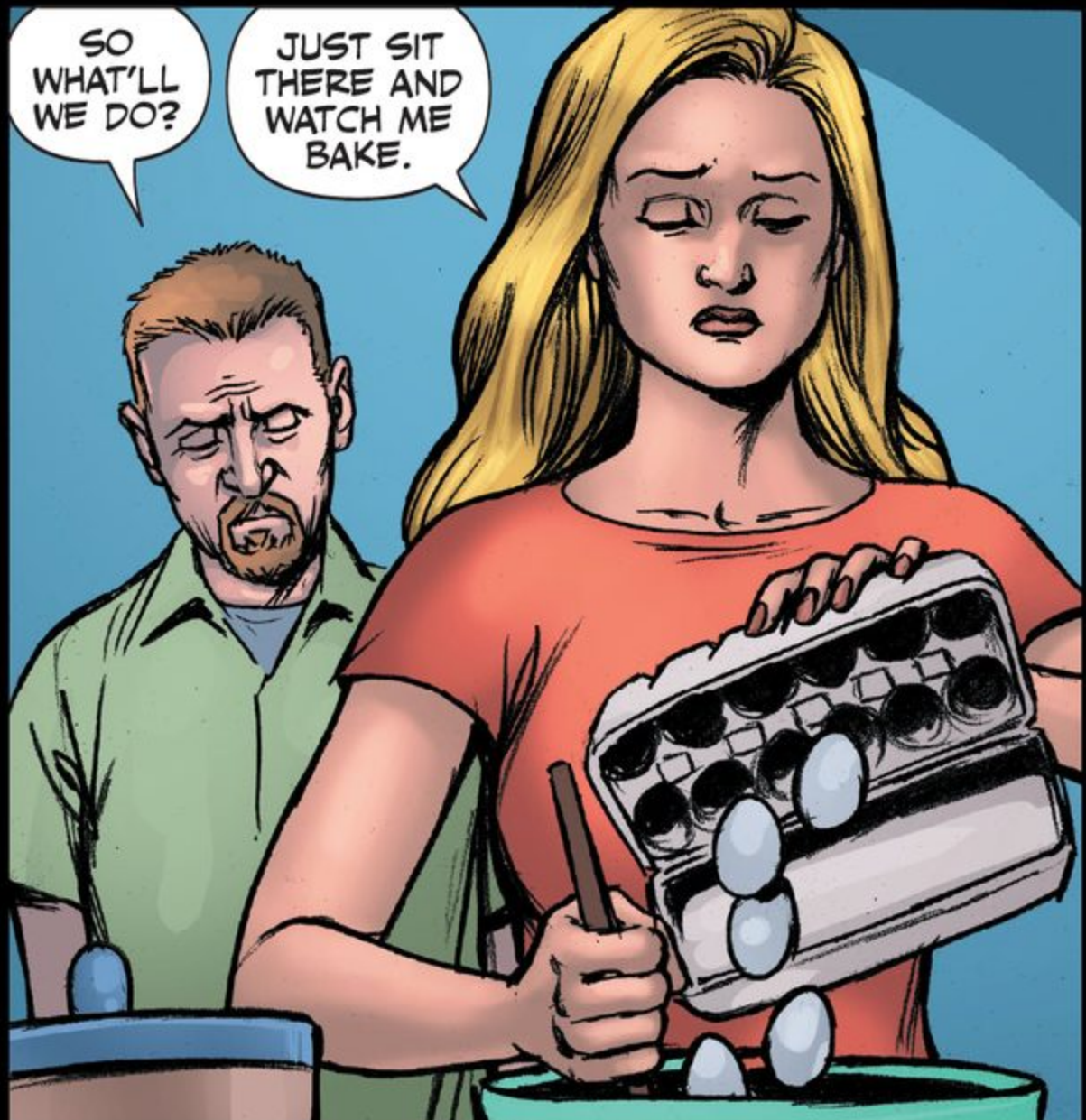
I DON'T MEAN HIM, YOU COULD NEVER BE HIM. I MEAN YOU'RE NOT SOME MYTHICAL TOUGH GUY WHO PLAYS HIS CARDS CLOSE TO HIS CHEST AND GIVES NOTHING AWAY.

HE WAS LIKE THAT, AND LOOK WHAT IT COST HIM...



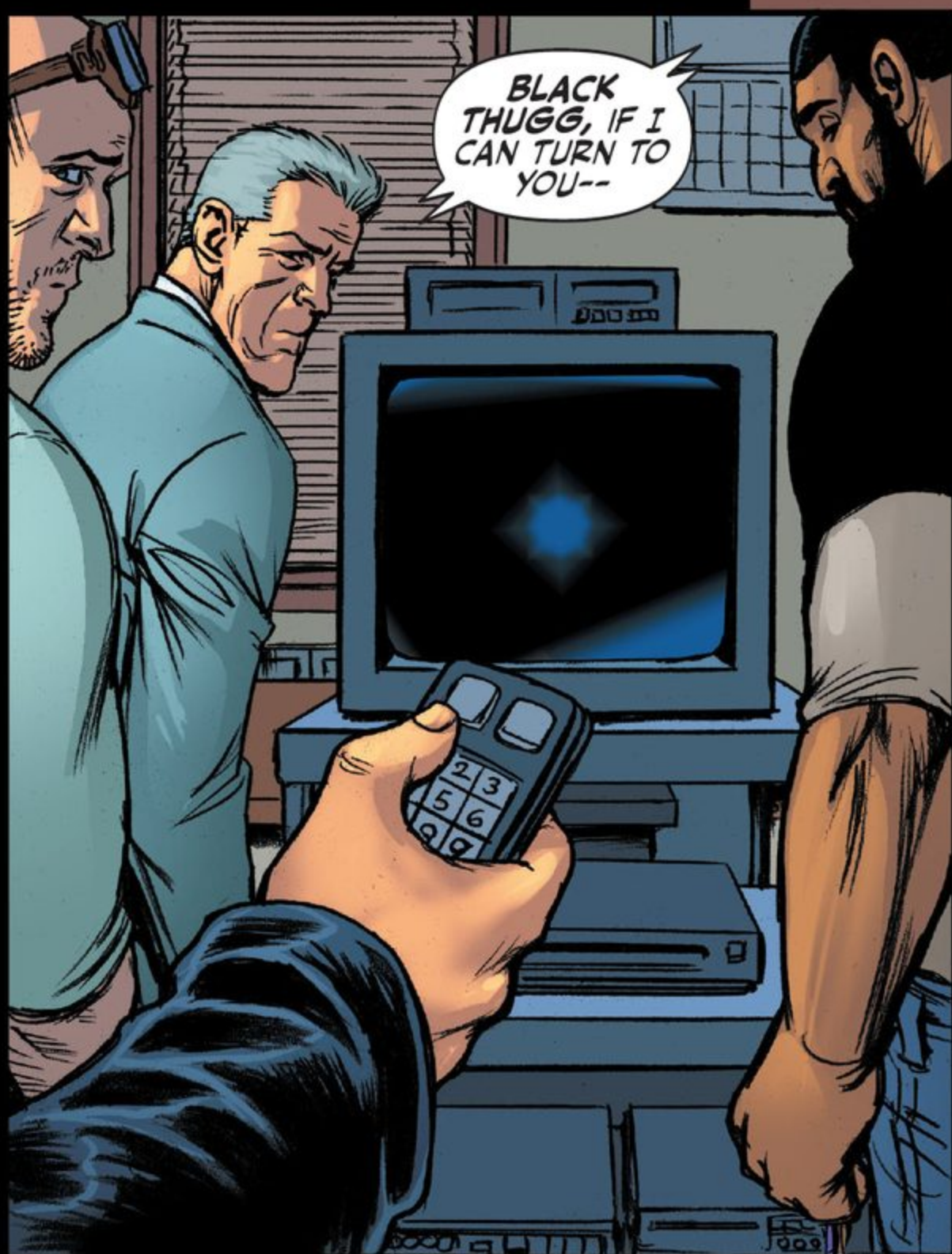
OH, THIS IS JUST LIKE IT WAS BACK THEN.

REMEMBER HOW I USED TO CATCH YOU OUT? ALL THE TIMES I HAD TO TELL YOU THIS?



SO WHAT'LL WE DO?

JUST SIT THERE AND WATCH ME BAKE.





...CERTAINLY GLAD YOU COULD JOIN ME TODAY. READY TO DO A FANTASTIC LITTLE PAINTING WITH ME?

I UNDERSTAND BAXTER-PUGH'S ON ALL THE TALK SHOWS.



GREAT. SO TELL YOU WHAT, LET'S HAVE 'EM GRAPHICALLY RUN ALL THE COLORS ACROSS THE SCREEN THAT YOU NEED TO PAINT ALONG WITH ME.

SO THIS IS COMING ALONG NICELY...

YEAH, ABOUT THAT. THE SEVEN AIN'T HAD SHIT TO SAY.



NO?
FRENCHIE AN' ME BEEN LISTENIN' IN, I MEAN CHECK THE LOGS YOURSELF...

I DO.

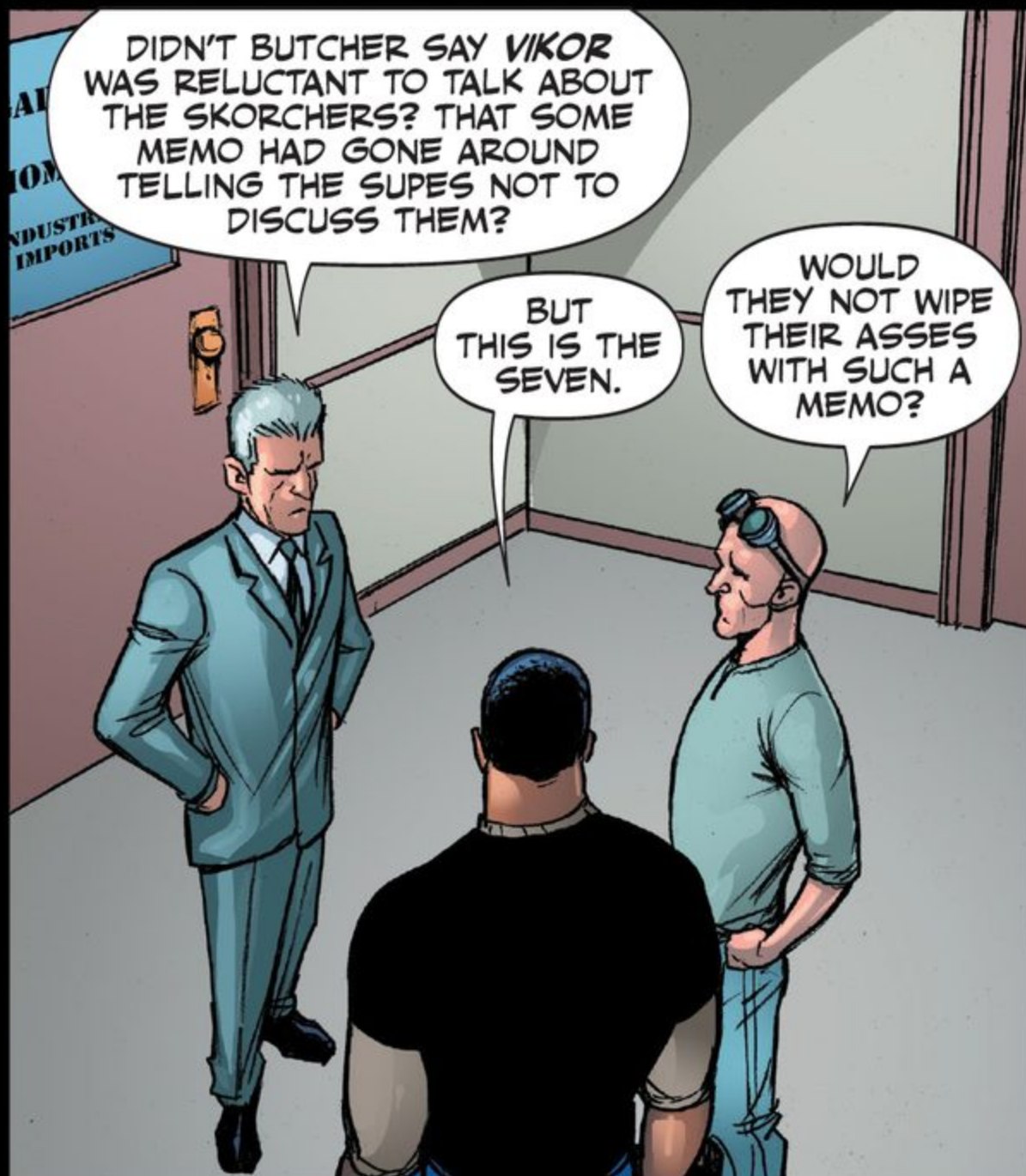
IF J.B.P. IS THE MAN TO WATCH, THEY ARE NOT WATCHING HIM. NOT EVEN A MENTION, MON COLONEL.



THE CLOSEST THOSE BUFFOONS GET TO DISCUSSING REAL LIFE IS WHEN THEY'RE WHINING ABOUT THEIR RESIDUALS...

TRUE. BUT IF THE SKORCHERS REALLY DO MEAN SHIT'S GOIN' DOWN AT VOUGHT, WOULDN'T THEY HAVE SOMETHIN' TO SAY?

THE COMPANY IS THEIR MEAL TICKET, N'EST-CE PAS? AND NOT EVEN THEIR FREQUENT VISITORS FROM VOUGHT HAVE RAISED THE MATTER.



DIDN'T BUTCHER SAY **VIKOR** WAS RELUCTANT TO TALK ABOUT THE SKORCHERS? THAT SOME MEMO HAD GONE AROUND TELLING THE SUPES NOT TO DISCUSS THEM?

BUT THIS IS THE SEVEN.

WOULD THEY NOT WIPE THEIR ASSES WITH SUCH A MEMO?



IF THEY EVEN READ IT.

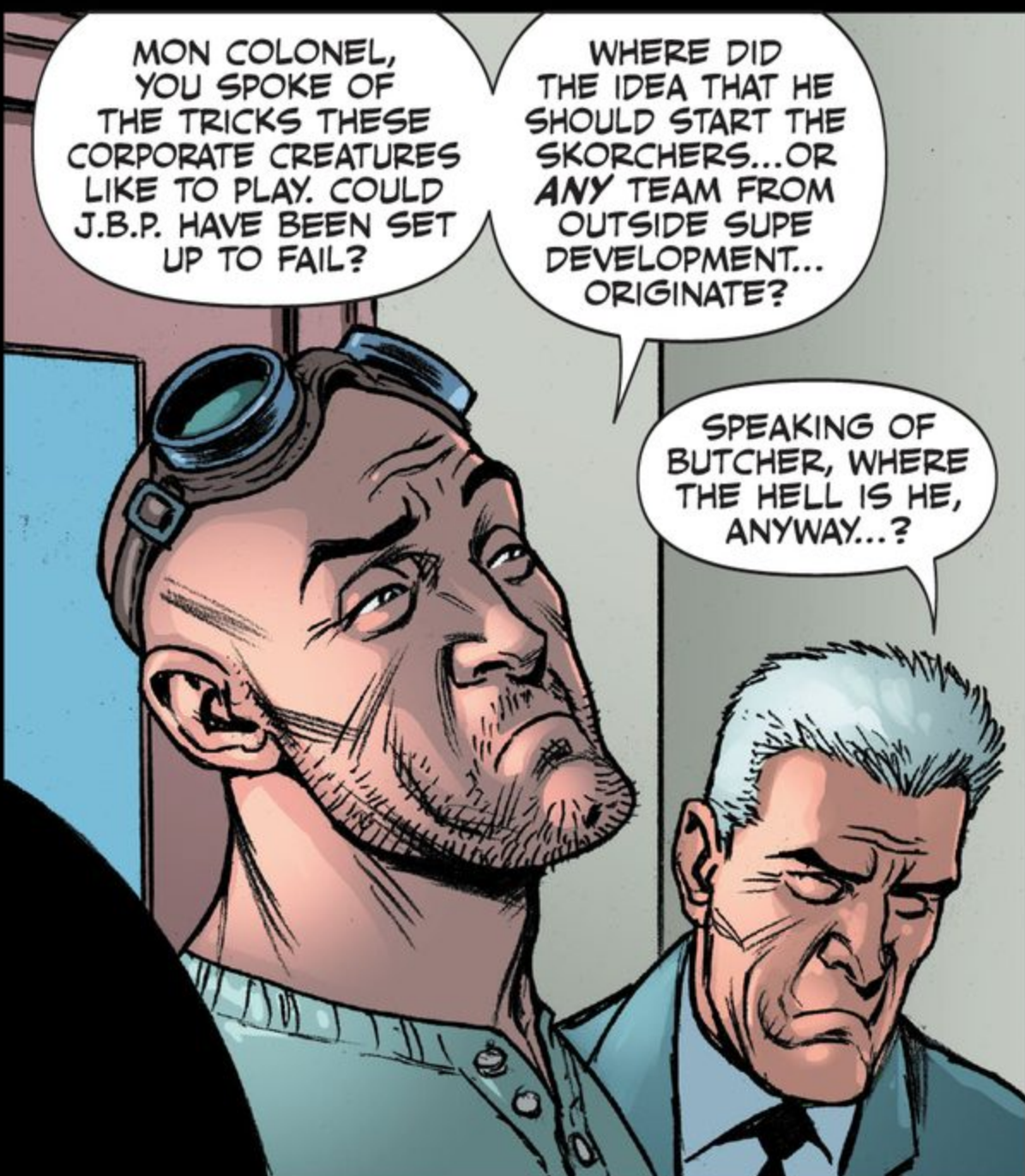
ALL WE HAVE FOR CERTAIN IS **VIKOR**'S REPORT ON LA SALLE BOCHE, STORMFRONT, AND HIS DISPUTE WITH BAXTER-PUGH: AND THOSE TWO WERE LINKED SOME YEARS AGO.

WAY I SEE IT, WE GOT TWO POSSIBILITIES HERE.



EVERY SUPE FROM THE SEVEN DOWN IS SCARED SHITLESS OF MENTIONIN' THE SKORCHERS. THEY DOIN' LIKE VOUGHT TOLD THEM 'CAUSE THESE FREAKS ARE THE SHAPE OF SHIT TO COME.

OR... THEY AIN'T.



MON COLONEL, YOU SPOKE OF THE TRICKS THESE CORPORATE CREATURES LIKE TO PLAY. COULD J.B.P. HAVE BEEN SET UP TO FAIL?

WHERE DID THE IDEA THAT HE SHOULD START THE SKORCHERS...OR ANY TEAM FROM OUTSIDE SUPE DEVELOPMENT... ORIGINATE?

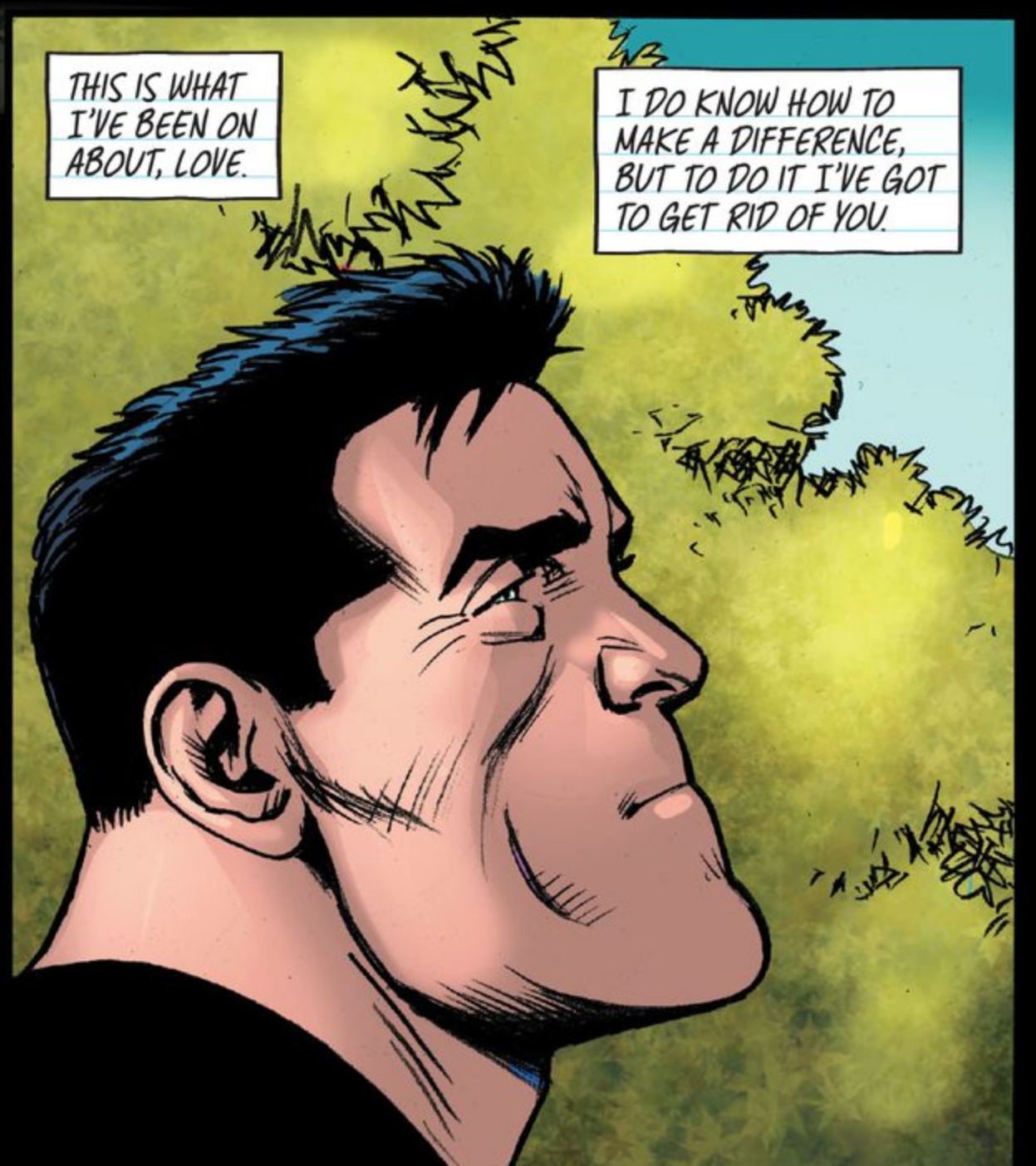
SPEAKING OF BUTCHER, WHERE THE HELL IS HE, ANYWAY...?



SAID HE GONNA BE IN LATER.

HE THINKS HE CAN COME AND GO AS HE...

LOOK, JUST STAY ON THIS, WILL YOU?





SO I CAN GO
OFF WITH SOME
DIRTY FUCKING
SLAG INSTEAD.



AND IF I WANT THAT, BECKY, I THINK I'VE GOT TO DO ONE BLOODY AWFUL OUT OF ORDER THING.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS EXACTLY. BUT I KNOW SOMETHING WILL COME ALONG, THE WAY I GET ON.



I MEAN I KNOW I'VE CHEATED ON YOU A BIT FROM TIME TO TIME.

BUT YOU LET ME OFF WITH IT, DON'T YOU? YOU SAY I CAN'T HELP IT, THE STATE I GET INTO.



THIS WOULD BE FAR WORSE, LOVE.

THIS WOULD DESTROY YOU.



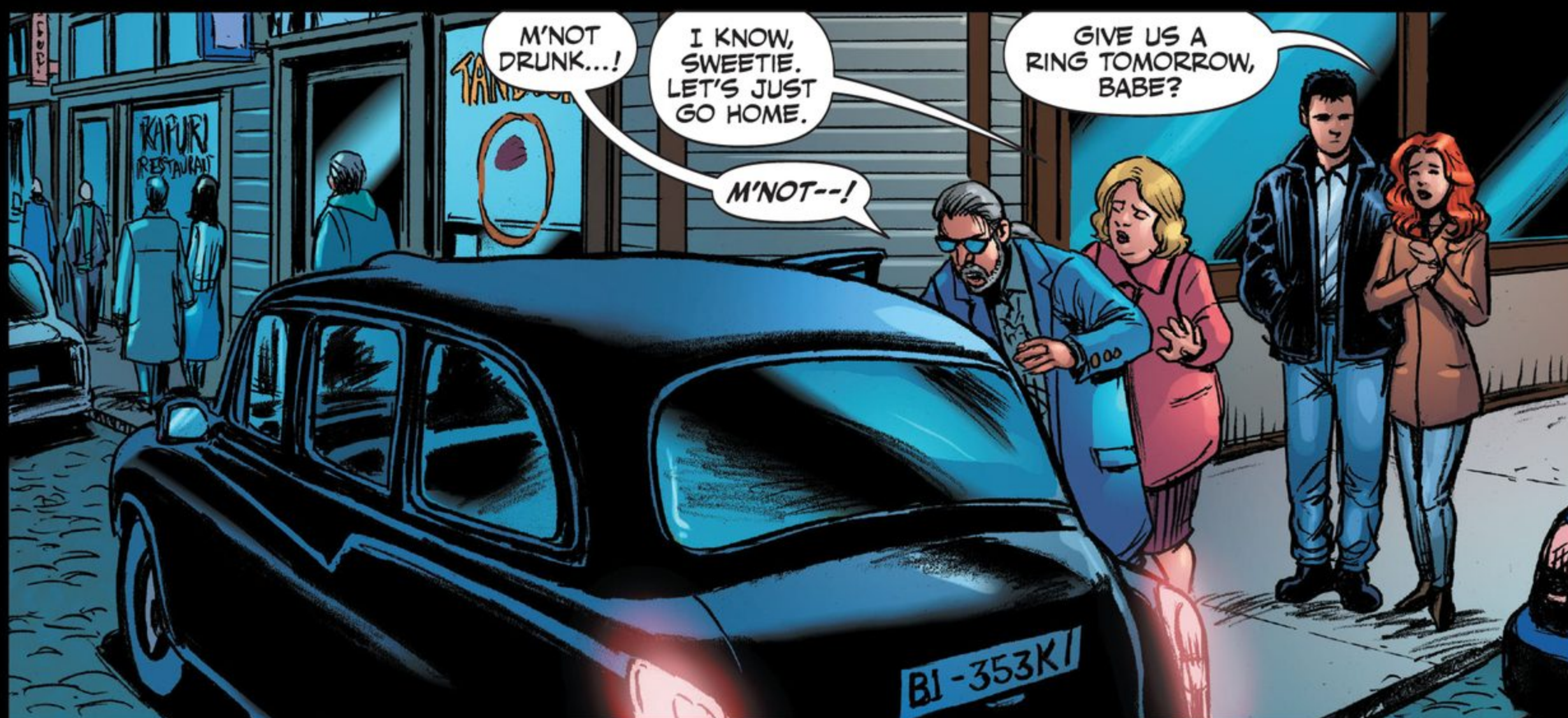
COME ON, MATE.

BECAUSE YOU'D KNOW YOU'D LOST ME FOR GOOD, AND THERE'D BE NO MORE POINT HANGING AROUND.

THAT'S WHY I'M STILL NOT SURE ABOUT THIS.



I'M SCARED OF YOU BEING GONE.



M'NOT
DRUNK...!

I KNOW,
SWEETIE.
LET'S JUST
GO HOME.

GIVE US A
RING TOMORROW,
BABE?

M'NOT--!



WILL
DO, BECKS.
SORRY.

WHAT YOU
SAYING **SORRY**
FOR--?

WELL,
YOU TOLD
ME SO.



WHAT,
ABOUT HER
HALF-INCHIN'
ME GARLIC
NAAN?

JESUS...!

I KNOW
YOU SAW HER.
YOU WERE
TRYNNA HIDE
THE LOOK ON
YER FACE.



YOU NOTICE
HOW HE NEVER
SAYS ME NAME? IT'S
ALWAYS YOU OR
WHATEVER?

NOT THAT
I MIND, I JUST
HOPE HE DON'T
THINK HE'S BEIN'
CLEVER OR
NOTHIN'...

OH, GOD,
LET'S NOT BE
LIKE THEM. LET'S
NEVER, **EVER** BE
A COUPLE LIKE
THEM.



TOUCH AN' GO, THE WAY YOU'RE ALWAYS STARTIN' BARNEYS WITH PEOPLE.

BATTLIN' BECKY, THERE SHE GOES AGAIN. AN' THERE'S POOR BILLY TRYINNA GET HER IN A TAXI, GOD HELP HIM.

YEAH, THAT'LL BE RIGHT, THEN--!



IT'S NICE OUT, INNIT? YOU WANNA WALK FOR A BIT?

YEAH, IT AIN'T THAT COLD.

WHERE ARE WE, ANYWAY? GUY WAS ON AN' ON ABOUT THAT RESTAURANT, I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS ALL THAT BRILLIANT...

MUSWELL HILL.



YEAH?

I DONE A BIT O' WORK ON THE SITE DOWN THE ROAD.

I'M A BIT SURPRISED AT OL' GUY, TO BE HONEST, I MEAN IT'S BLOODY YUPPIE CENTRAL ROUND HERE...



OH, HE JUST WOULDN'T GIVE OVER, WOULD HE? ALL THAT STUFF ABOUT WORKIN' CLASS PEOPLE VOTIN' AGAINST THEIR OWN INTERESTS.

YEAH, HE KEPT LOOKIN' AT ME WHEN HE SAID IT, TOO...

TOSSER.



BECKY BUTCHER...!

WELL WHAT DOES HE KNOW ABOUT HOW YOU--WAIT A MINUTE, IS THIS YOU ON ABOUT ME BEIN' A GOODY TWO-SHOES AGAIN?





...MAYBE...

AN'
WHEN THEY SAID
COME DANCIN',
ME SISTER
ALWAYS DID!



ME SISTER
SHOULD'VE COME
IN AT MIDNIGHT, AN'
ME MUM WOULD
ALWAYS SIT UP
AN' WAIT...

THIS
ALL RIGHT
HERE, GUV?

OH MY GOD,
THIS IS GONNA
BANKRUPT
US--!



NAH,
I GOT PAID
FRIDAY, WE'RE
SORTED!

NOW I'M
GROWN UP AN'
PLAYIN' IN A BAND,
AN' THERE'S A
CAR PARK WHERE
THE PALLY USED
TO STAND...

BLOODY
HELL, WHAT'S
THIS?



WHUP--!

IT'S ME WHITE
BOY BOOGIE.
LENNY AN' THEM
DOWN THE DUKE'S
HEAD, THAT'S WHAT
THEY CALL IT.



AW, POOR
BILLY, DID THE
NASTY ROUGH
BOYS TAKE
THE PISS?

NEVER
MIND,
DARLIN'.



LIFE
WASN'T MEANT
TO BE FAIR.



I'VE BEEN
CHEATING ON YOU
EVERY MINUTE SINCE
YOU DIED, LOVE.



BECAUSE I'VE BEEN
USING YOU AS AN
EXCUSE FOR WHAT
I WANT TO DO.

THE STUFF
INSIDE ME I
WANT TO LET
LOOSE.

THAT YOU
WOULDN'T BE
ABLE TO STAND.



YOU'RE THE ONE
LOST HER LIFE, BUT
I'M DOING WHAT I'M
DOING FOR ME.

...WHEN IT
WAS JUST THE TWO
OF US PEOPLE DIED,
I'M NOT DENYING
THAT--BUT SINCE
THIS *TEAM* WAS
FORMED, I DON'T
KNOW...

**GARAND
&
THOMPSON**
INDUSTRIAL
IMPORTS



WE'VE
HAD TWICE
THE--

I'M
PRETTY SURE
WE'RE BEIN'
FUCKED.



NICE
OF YOU TO
JOIN US...

YEAH,
INNIT?

I'VE BEEN
THINKIN' ABOUT
THIS, AN' I RECKON
THE PROBLEM IS
WE AIN'T LOOKED
AT THINGS FROM
THE OPPOSITION'S
POINT OF
VIEW.



YOU'RE
VOUGHT-AMERICAN.
YOU'RE A SHOWER O'
SMUG, CORPORATE
CUNTS, BUT YOU
AIN'T STUPID.

YOU AIN'T
GOT WHERE YOU HAVE
JUST BY COLORIN' IN
SUPE COSTUMES A BIT
DIFFERENT EVERY TIME
YOU INVENT A NEW ONE,
AN' THEN SITTIN' BACK
AN' RELAXIN'.



BLACK THUGG



LOONY



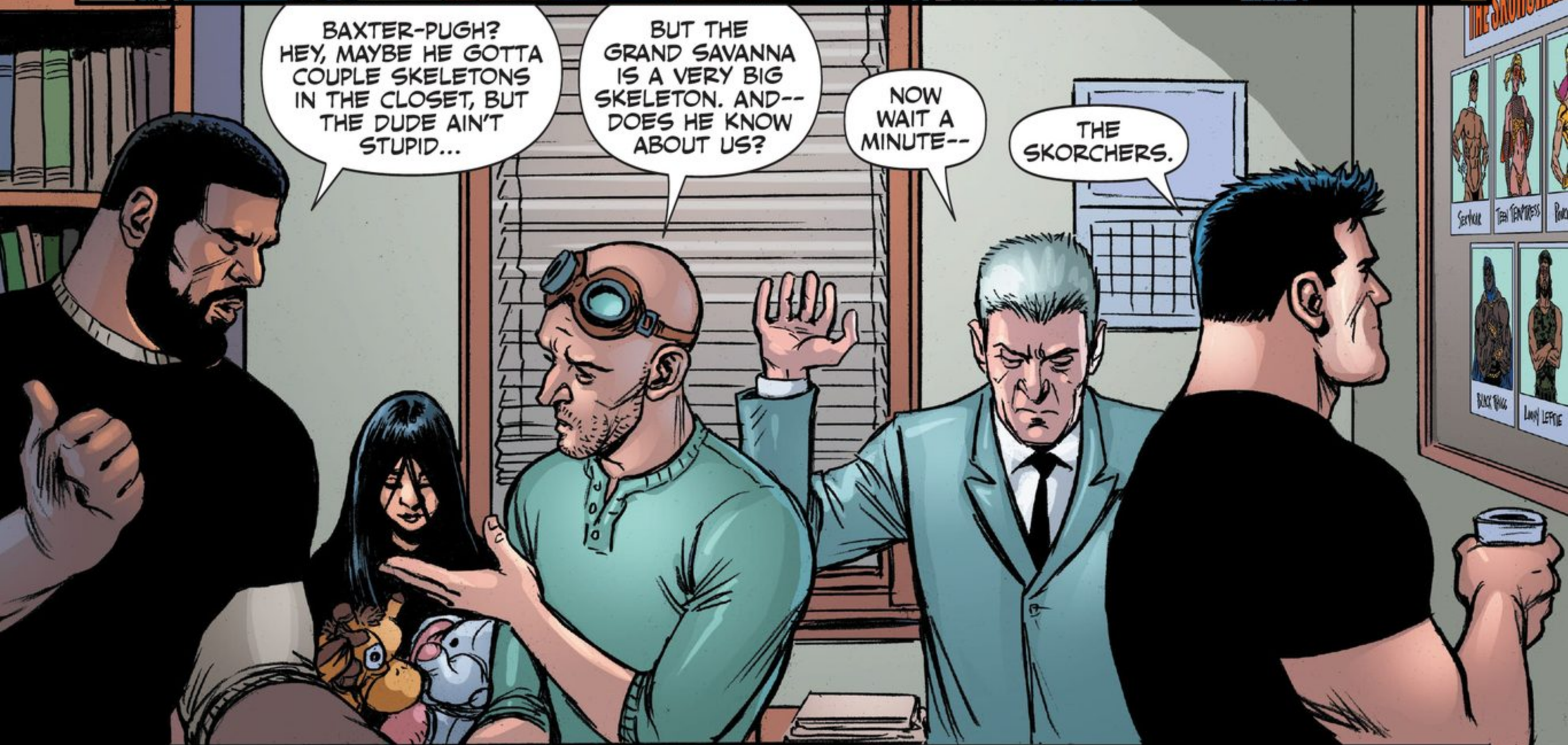
SOMEONE STARTS
NOBBLIN' YER SUPES. EVEN
KILLIN' THE ODD ONE NOW AN'
AGAIN. YOU'VE GOT CONTACTS,
YOU KNOW PEOPLE, AN' YOU
FIND OUT THERE'S THESE BOYS
PROBABLY ASSIGNED TO THE
JOB--**PROBABLY** BY THE
U.S. GOVERNMENT.

ALL RIGHT, NO
BIG SURPRISE, NOT
REALLY. AN' NOT AN
AWFUL LOT CAN BE
DONE, THE BALANCE
O' POWER BEIN'
WHAT IT IS.



BUT BEIN' THE CORPORATE CUNTS THAT YOU ARE, HOW LONG IS IT BEFORE YOU START WONDERIN' IF YOU CAN MAKE THESE BOYS WORK FOR YOU?

LIKE... MAYBE GET THEM TO GET RID O' SOME O' YER RUBBISH?

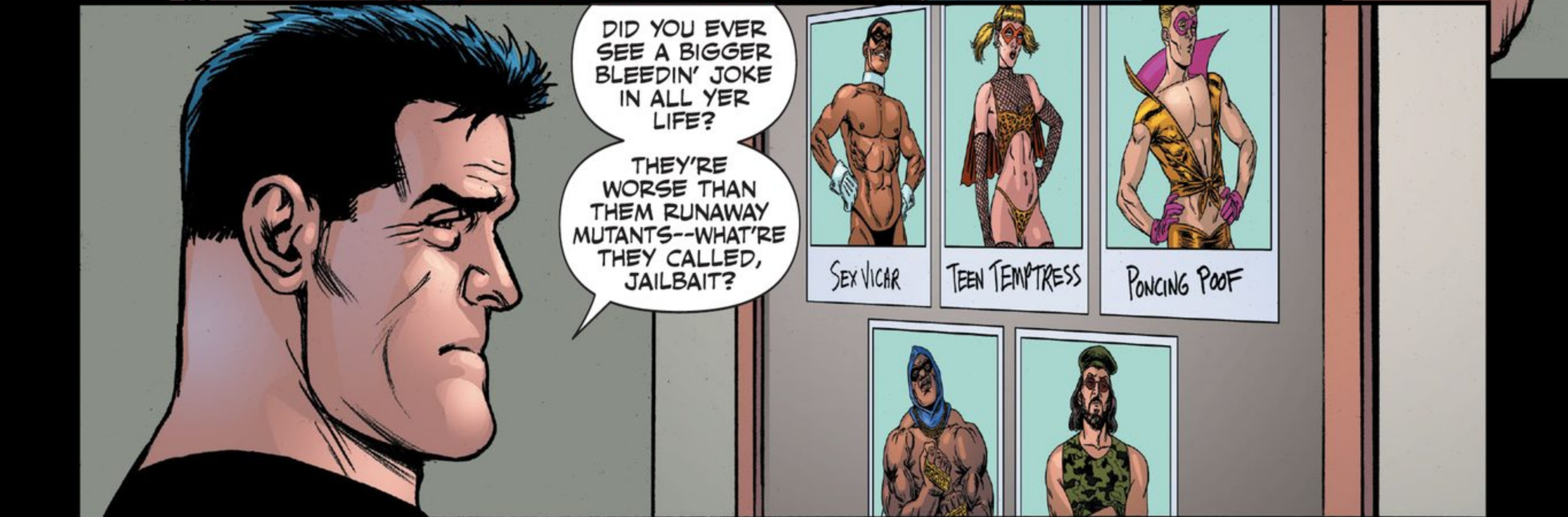


BAXTER-PUGH? HEY, MAYBE HE GOTTA COUPLE SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET, BUT THE DUDE AIN'T STUPID...

BUT THE GRAND SAVANNA IS A VERY BIG SKELETON. AND-- DOES HE KNOW ABOUT US?

NOW WAIT A MINUTE--

THE SKORCHERS.



DID YOU EVER SEE A BIGGER BLEEDIN' JOKE IN ALL YER LIFE?

THEY'RE WORSE THAN THEM RUNAWAY MUTANTS--WHAT'RE THEY CALLED, JAILBAIT?



SEX VICAR



TEEN TEMPTRESS



PONCING POOF



THIS IS HIS WEAKNESS, THIS TABLOID SHIT HE MADE HIS NAME WITH. IT'S NEVER GONNA WORK IN A MILLION YEARS.

BUT IF YOU'RE A FUCKIN' EGOMANIAC LIKE BAXTER-PUGH, AN' SOMEONE CLEARS THE DECKS FOR YOUR LITTLE EXPERIMENT YOU'RE DYIN' TO DO, THIS BOLLOCKS YOU'RE ALWAYS GOIN' ON ABOUT...

TEEN TEMPTRESS

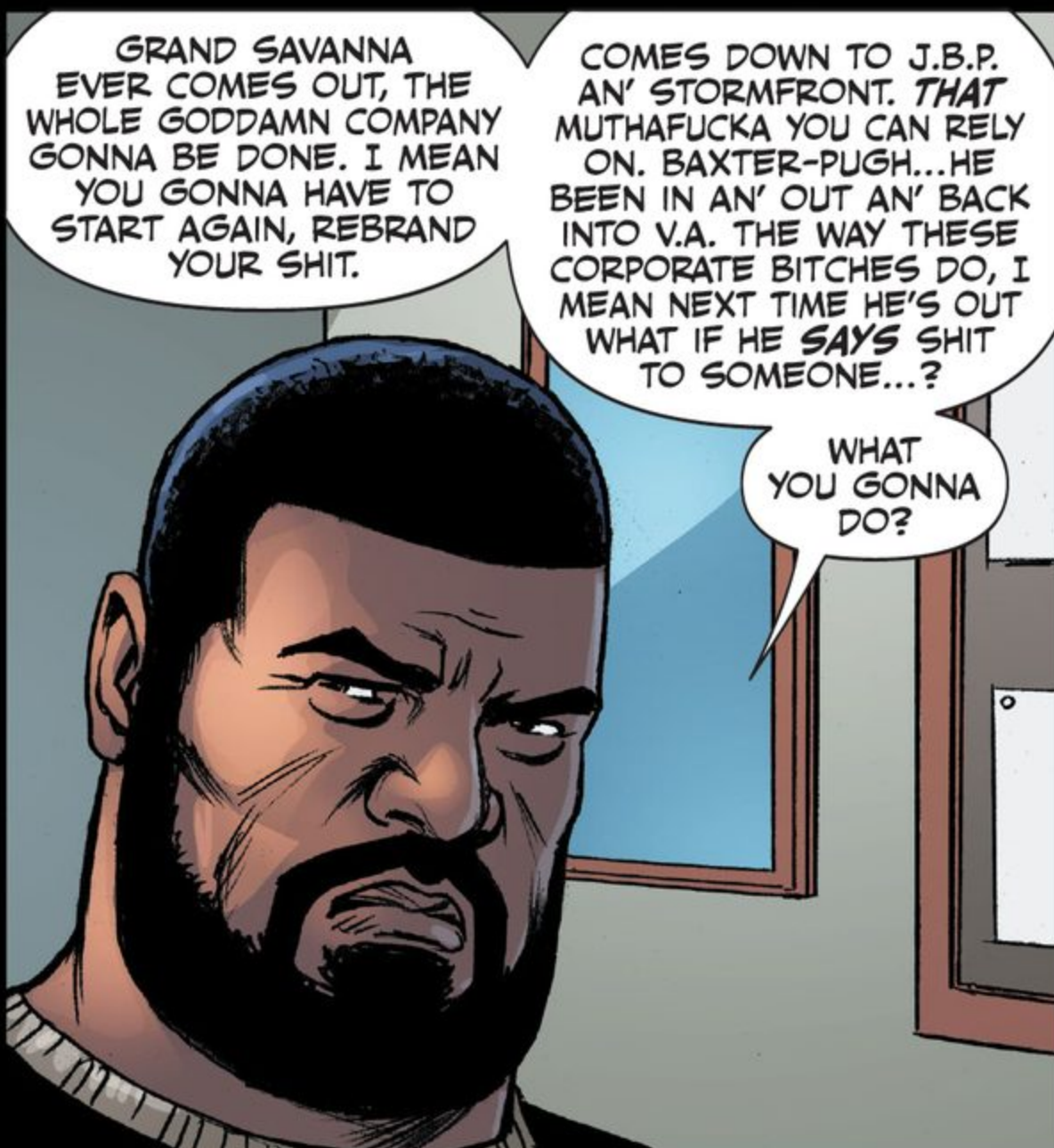
PONCING POOF



MERDE.

LET'S
THINK IT
THROUGH.

LIKE
THE MAN SAYS,
YOU'RE VOUGHT.
YOU'RE SOMEONE
AT VOUGHT DON'T
LIKE J.B.P..



GRAND SAVANNA
EVER COMES OUT, THE
WHOLE GODDAMN COMPANY
GONNA BE DONE. I MEAN
YOU GONNA HAVE TO
START AGAIN, REBRAND
YOUR SHIT.

COMES DOWN TO J.B.P.
AN' STORMFRONT. *THAT*
MUTHAFUCKA YOU CAN RELY
ON. BAXTER-PUGH...HE
BEEN IN AN' OUT AN' BACK
INTO V.A. THE WAY THESE
CORPORATE BITCHES DO, I
MEAN NEXT TIME HE'S OUT
WHAT IF HE *SAYS* SHIT
TO SOMEONE...?

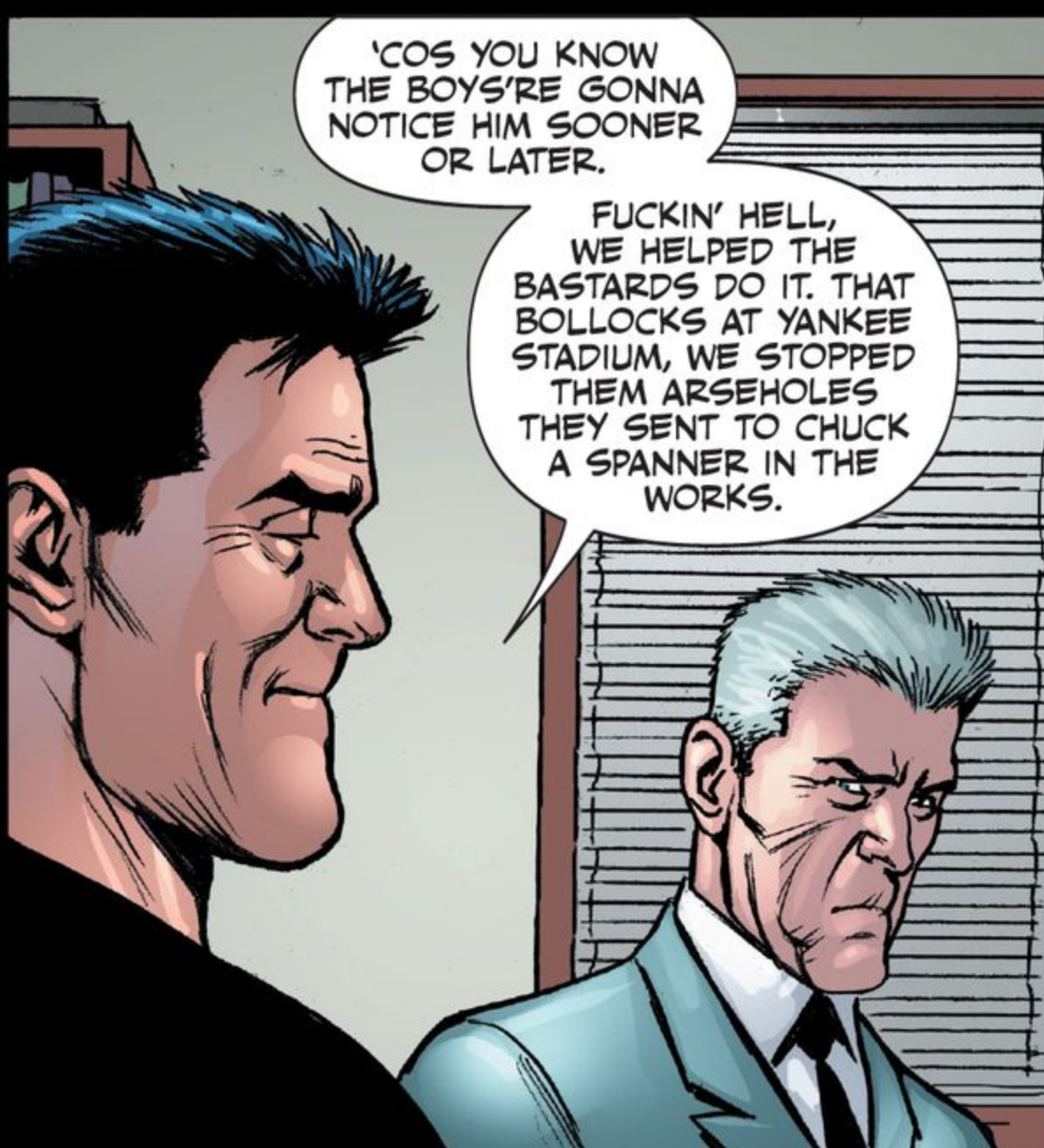
WHAT
YOU GONNA
DO?



KEEP HIM
CLOSE.

INDULGE
HIM.

AND...
GIVE HIM
ENOUGH
ROPE.



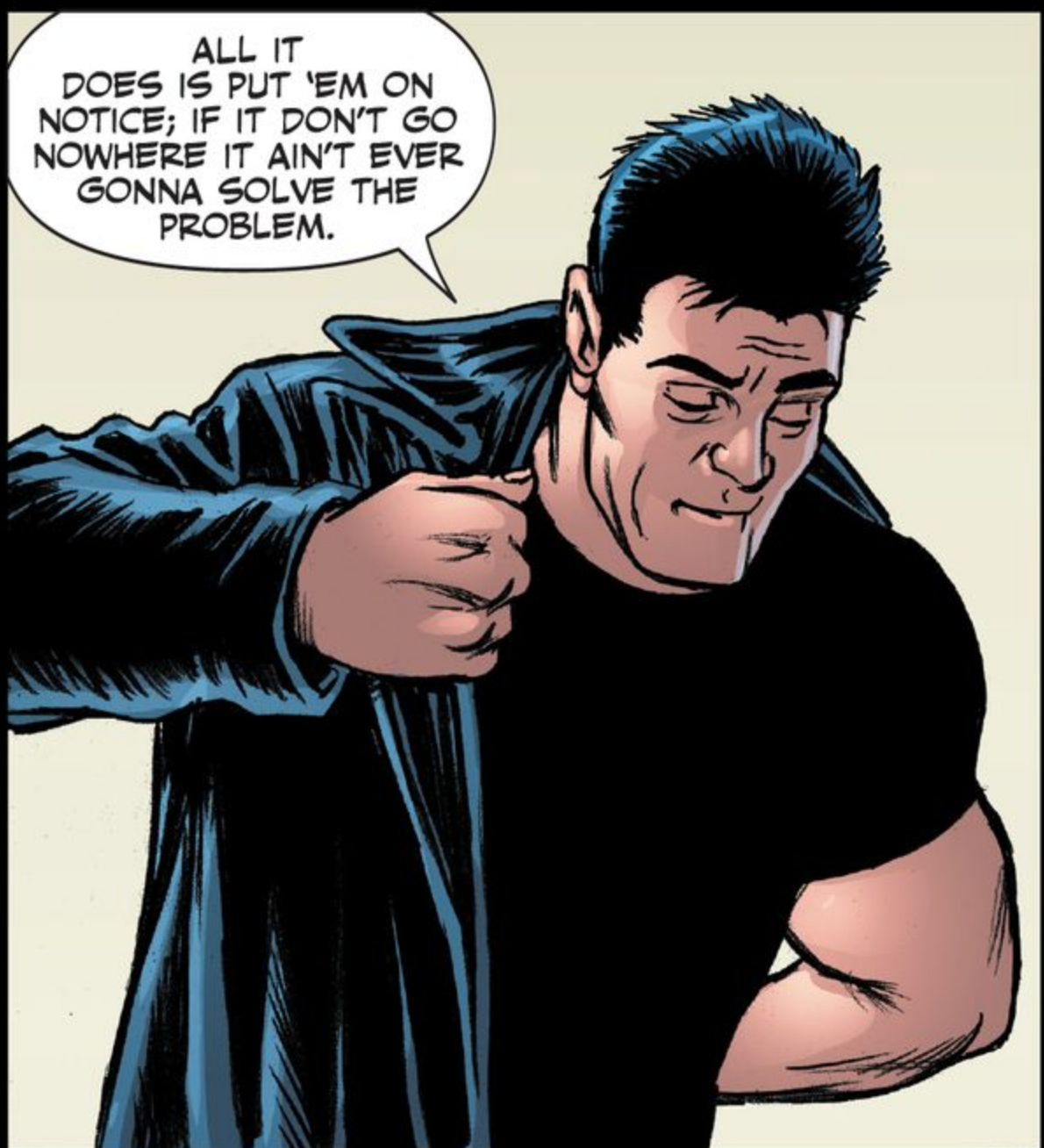
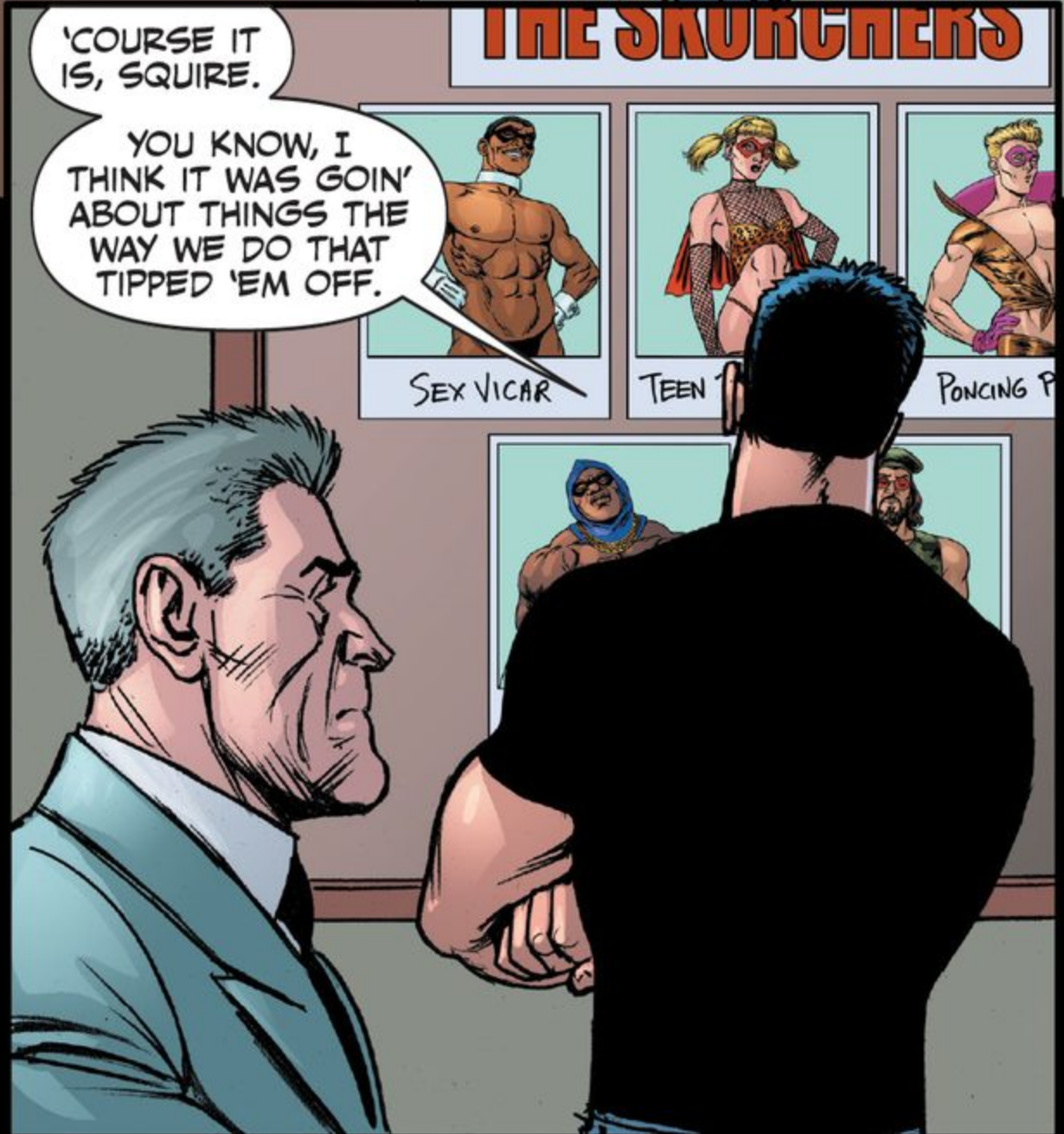
'COS YOU KNOW
THE BOYS'RE GONNA
NOTICE HIM SOONER
OR LATER.

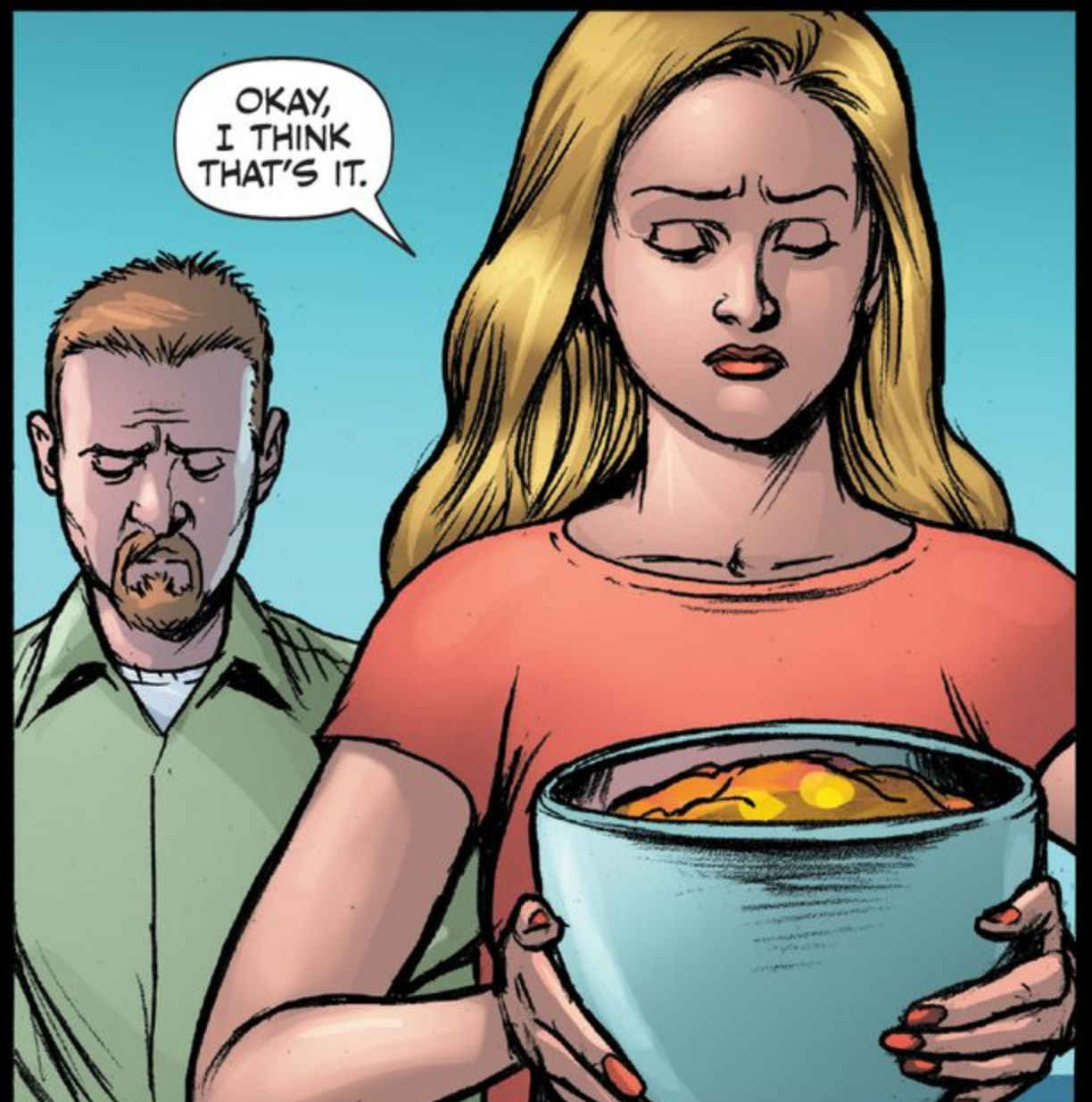
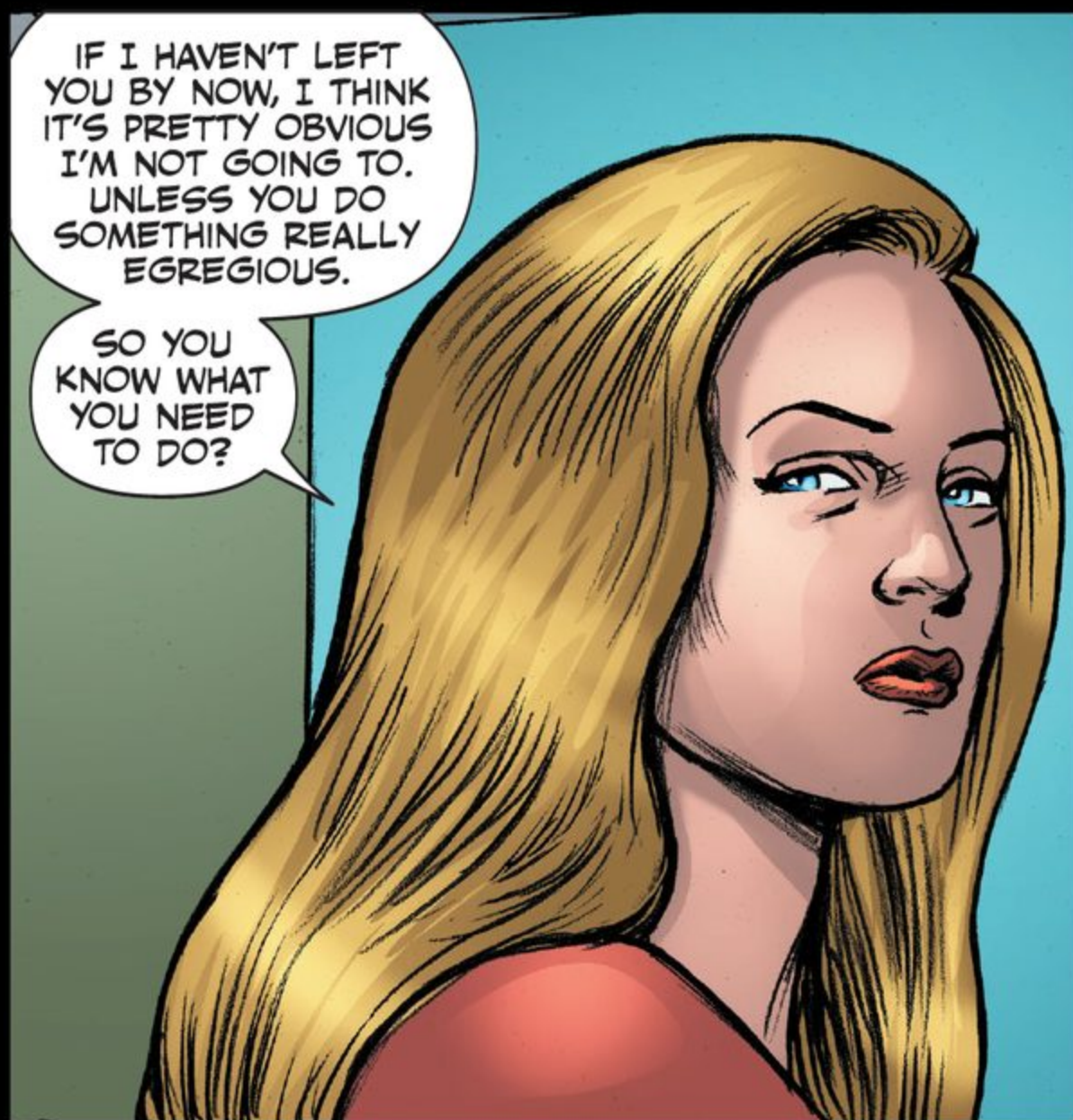
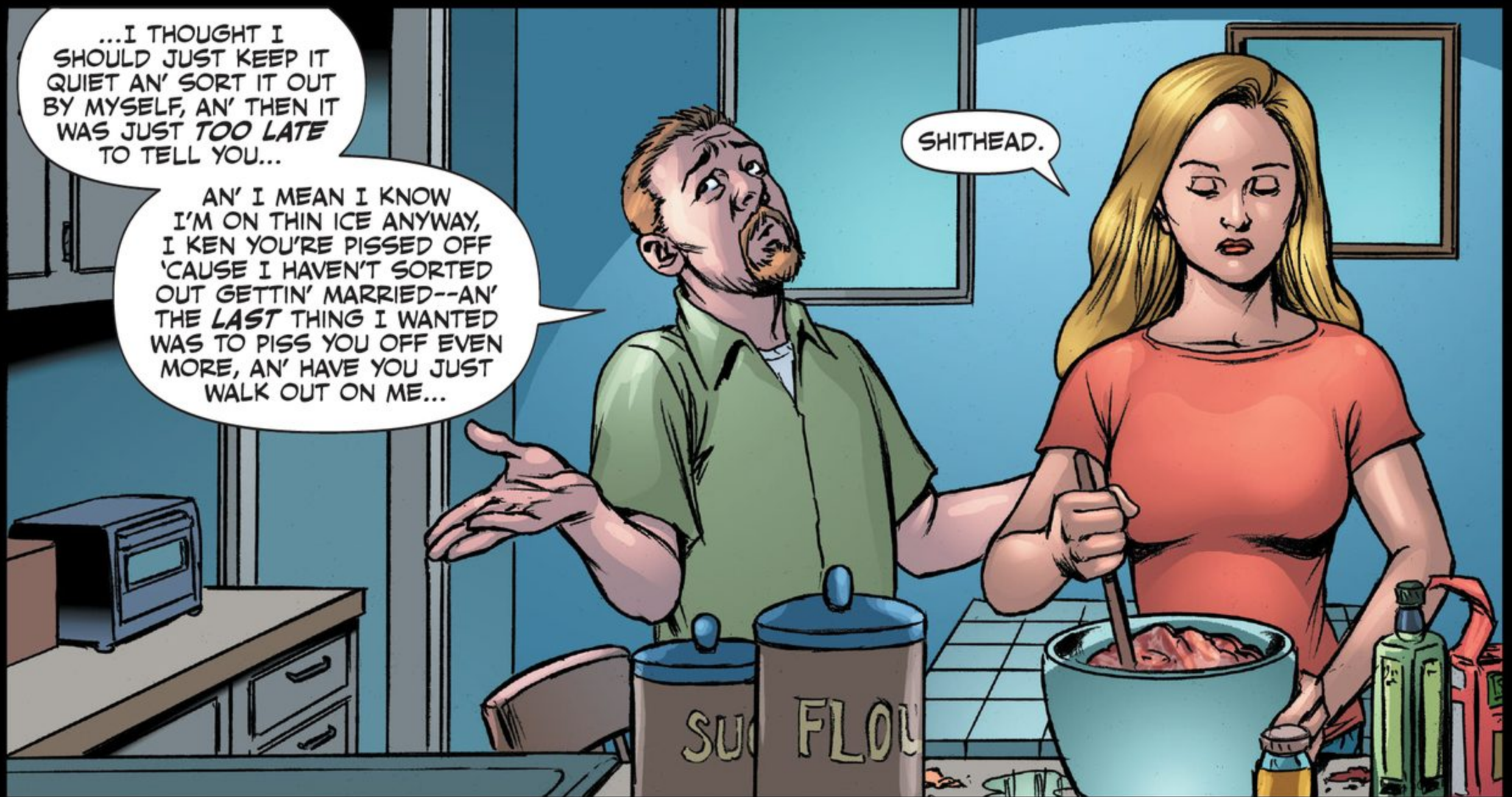
FUCKIN' HELL,
WE HELPED THE
BASTARDS DO IT. THAT
BOLLOCKS AT YANKEE
STADIUM, WE STOPPED
THEM ARSEHOLES
THEY SENT TO CHUCK
A SPANNER IN THE
WORKS.

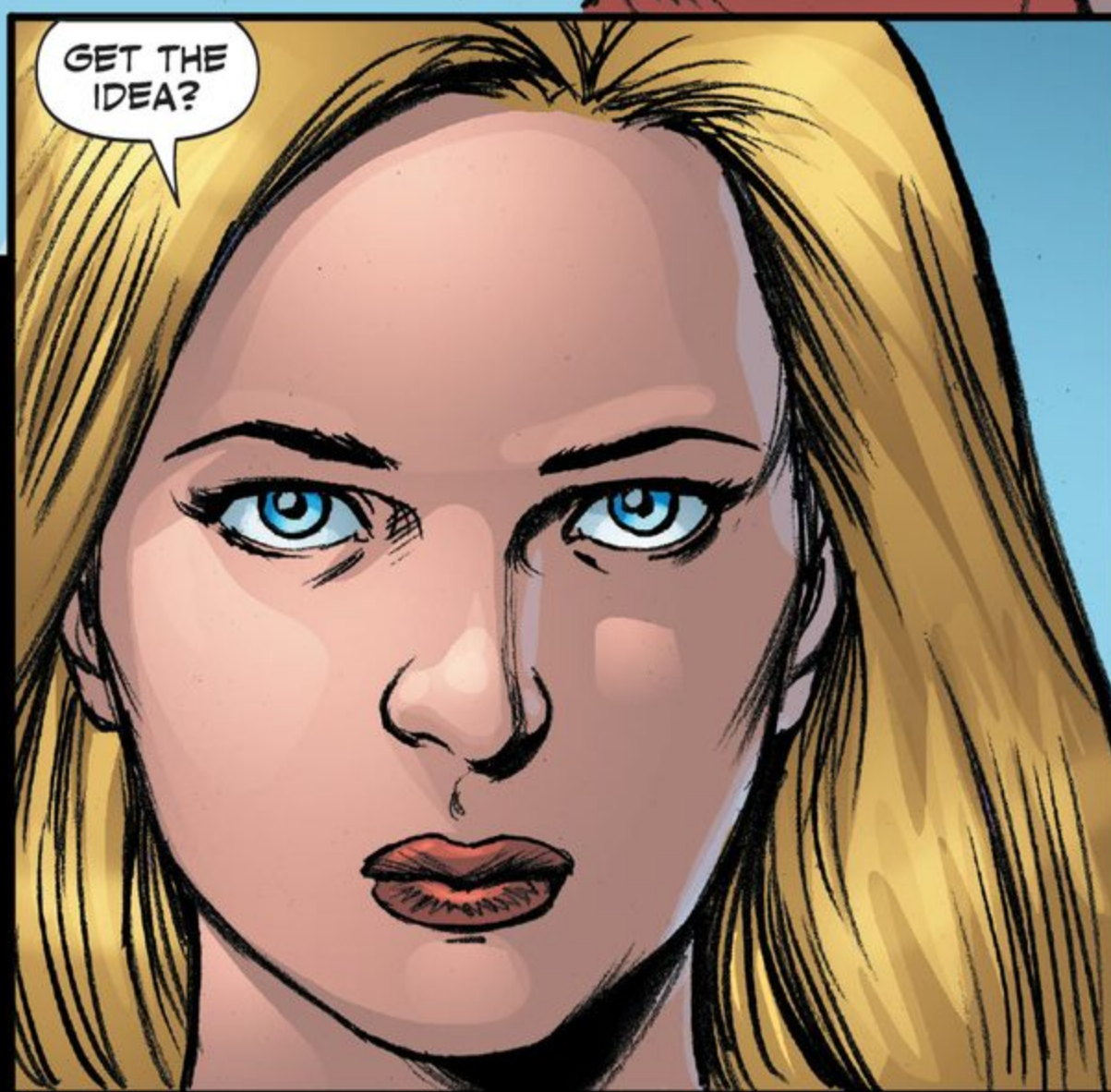


WE SET THE
SKORCHERS UP FOR
OURSELVES.









DAN ABNETT & COMPANY DISCUSS THE CHALLENGE OF ONE OF DYNAMITE'S BIGGEST CROSSOVERS EVER!

Dan, you've done these kinds of interweaving crossovers before in your career, such as when you were head honcho of the acclaimed revival of Marvel's cosmic franchises. Or further back with the Legion of Super-Heroes or even Marvel UK. How do you manage all these spinning plates? And then can you expand on the premise of this specific project a bit?

Abnett: With anything like this, there are obvious logistical problems to overcome - such as maintaining visual continuity between artists (or writers, but that's not an issue with this one), keeping all the plates spinning, keeping things meshed, etc. But overall, they are immense fun to create, and - I hope - to read. Crossing series gives you extra real estate to explore, and bigger world-building to do, plus there is the story scope of the longer form and the delight in seeing unexpected encounters between characters.

This one will be an absolute blast. For a start, we take two icons - Vampirella and Red Sonja - and plunge them into a story together. Now, Dynamite has mixed them up before, very successfully, but it's always a challenge to make it work - they are very different characters, from very different "worlds," usually found in very different story types. This takes them both out of their home territories and their comfort zones - literally - and makes them outsiders in an entirely different world. The extra secret ingredient is Project Superpowers, Dynamite's wonderful, classic, and underused stable of costumed heroes.

The hook is simply - what if Vampirella and Red Sonja were recruited to a superhero team, and had to deal with superheroes? How would they fit (quick answer - they wouldn't), and how badly wrong could it all go wrong? This is high concept, pan-cosmic superheroes (developing, along the way, some great concepts and some really appealing Project heroes) with two quite savage and dangerous characters tied up in the heart of it. It's going to be fun, it's going to be different, it's going to be a head-on genre clash... and it's going to turn into an epic story.

To clarify for all the fans, another series starring Red Sonja will be following this next month and the two will be connected and build to even more [more news coming soon!]. How are you writing these to work in parallel?

Abnett: They are their own stories, entirely separate, but linked by common ideas and a common framework (The Project). The fun in both of them is exploring iconic characters in very unfamiliar circumstances. There's a drama and adventure, but also quite a lot of humour and culture clash. And as the two series develop, they start to link up more and more. I'm literally writing them side by side, trying to keep them consistent, trying to ensure each series has its own, satisfying story - so each can be read and enjoyed on its own, but reading both will definitely amplify the fun. And I'm trying to keep the "essence" of each character's strip and "voice" intact, so the Vampirella series has a very "Vampi" feel, and the Red Sonja series maintains a true taste of Hyborian adventure.

Vampirella has been many things, but she's rarely presented in a traditional superheroic lens. Without spoiling the developments of the series, what's your take on how she does and does not fit the bill?

Abnett: It actually applies to both of them - Vampi and Red both qualify

as heroes: they have the abilities and courage and determination. The problems (and fun) arise because they are both outsiders. They are not team players, they are not orthodox. They do not play well with "clean-cut" superheroes, because they have their own - quite-brutal, quite-savage - codes. They do things that costumed heroes would not. That's where the joy of these stories begins. It's not a joke story or a dream... we're trying to explore the idea that - if this really happened - what would it be like? Genuinely, how would it work? Can these disparate genres mash-up and remain authentic? Quick answer - they really can, so join us and find out!

Paul, you're tasked on this series with drawing a wide range of characters and a ton of action. Even with all that, is Vampi your favorite to draw?

Davidson: Vampirella obviously! I've been a Frank Frazetta fan from being a boy. His 1969 painting of her blew my mind when I first saw it in the 80's and drawing Vampirella has always been on my bucket list! It's a thrill to be drawing comic book royalty. I'm all set for the party, and ready to dance with these lovely ladies :)

Hassan, many Dynamite fans should know your work as one of the best letterers in the biz on Red Sonja. As you're lettering both titles for this project, can you speak to developing a shared look and how they may differ?

Ostmane-Elhaou: Like Dan said, they do operate in completely different worlds, and so much of a letterer's job is marrying style to artwork, so the plan is to have these feel like distinct titles and worlds, but with a few unifying features through the lettering. Ultimately they're going to look and feel different, but be connected by story, so the lettering should try and balance that same thing, too, without wiping out any character between the two. I think of something like Red Sonja and Killing Red Sonja, which were totally different art styles, and so demanded different lettering styles, too. But there are things that unify the series in the caption approach, and the way location titles are handled as objects in the space. I hope that there's still enough between those two very distinct series and styles that brings them together as one, so my intention is to think of this in a not-dissimilar way.



NEXT ISSUE

Butcher comes clean about why he's doing what he's doing, while Annie helps Hughie understand a few truths of his own. It's time for the Boys to clean house- which for Julian Baxter Pugh and the Skorchers, might just be very bad news indeed...



cover A
**DARICK
ROBERTSON**
colors by
TONY AVIÑA



LINE ART PREMIUM
FOC BONUS VARIANT
COVER
**DARICK
ROBERTSON**



VIRGIN ART PREMIUM
FOC BONUS VARIANT
COVER
**DARICK
ROBERTSON**
colors by
TONY AVIÑA

Cover Gallery